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February 27, 2023
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ARC of Southington
SEIU District 1199NE
Before the Finance Committee

In Support of HB 5673 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REFORMATION OF CERTAIN TAXES AND TAX EQUITY

Good Afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Horn and members of the Committee. My name is Symone Destin and I am a . I live in Waterbury and work in Hamden as a Residential Instructor at the ARC of Southington. I am here to testify in support of House Bill 5673.

I love my job because I can give my time to helping others with many things. I help my residents with everyday tasks that would be considered easy for us, but for them it's a bit challenging at times. I teach my residents how to use, count, and spend their money. I also help out with their hygiene by helping them shower, brushing their teeth, dressing them to look presentable, cooking for them, and overall just being as much help as I can be for them as a caregiver and friend. But, we are not respected for the work we do by this state, and make wages too low to survive sometimes. Having little to no money has kept me from eating at times. If I get sick, I have to go to the hospital because I don't have great healthcare and my bills are so expensive that I can't even afford to pay them. I want to start a life and have children now in my life but because I make unlivable wages I can't even think of that.

With more funding, I wouldn't have to worry about finances and I would be able to give the best care to my residents at my job because it would allow me to be the best person I could be . I would be less stressed while I'm around them. I wouldn't have to go through the extra hoops I have to jump through daily just to make ends meet. I would have more energy while I'm with my residents and actually get to have some fun with them.

As the wealthiest state in the country, Connecticut should be a shining example for the nation where every family has what we need to live a good life. But instead we have a state where hundreds of thousands of working people are struggling to raise families,

even while a handful of wealthy corporations and wealthy residents are getting even wealthier. . The scale of this crisis demands a bold response—people are suffering and our state has a responsibility, and we have the resources to enact policies that provide for Connecticut families. Please pass House Bill 5673. Thank you for your time.